

## Opening Remarks

by

Dr. Carl J. Daeufer

Director, Pacific Islands Studies Center

Professor, College of Education

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Tonight we launch the fourth in a series of annual conferences initiated by the Pacific Islands Studies Center. For those of you who have been with us at each conference you will recall that the first conference occurred in 1976. One of the purposes of these annual systemwide University of Hawaii Pacific Islands conferences is to bring together faculty and students from all campuses of the university system. Additionally, we have encouraged members of the community at-large as well as students and teachers from Hawaii's public and private secondary schools to attend each conference. As in the past, let me take this moment to extend a personal welcome to each of you.

Our first conference in 1976 was designed to identify those faculty and resources throughout the University of Hawaii system and members of historical societies who share the Pacific Islands area as a scholarly and teaching interest. While a strong scholarly community has long existed on the Manoa campus, no one had previously identified and brought together statewide university faculty and individuals representing various historical societies and professional associations concerned with Pacific Islands studies. That afternoon-evening conference in 1976 was a first attempt to create a coordinated statewide appraisal of efforts in Pacific Islands scholarship.

Our second conference in April, 1977, set out to determine how to understand the issues of development in the Pacific Islands region in order to apply these to teaching and/or research design and to explore what pattern(s) of development might be best for setting priorities in developmental planning activities in island countries. That day-long conference-workshop with the theme Development in the Pacific centered on the political, economic, social and demographic implications of development planning in Pacific Island communities.

In 1978, the planners of the third annual conference responded to the previous year's participants' wishes to have a longer conference. Thus, with the theme, Captain Cook and the Pacific Islands, last year's conference scheduled an evening presentation followed by three sessions the next day. Additionally, the Pacific Islands Studies Center ventured into the publication of the conference proceedings, with each registered participant receiving a copy.

The Pacific Islands Studies Center continues to sponsor with pride this annual conference together with the invaluable assistance from both the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council and the Pacific Islands Studies Program and supports the participation of University systemwide faculty. Again, the Center plans to publish the proceedings of this conference and will send a copy to each registered participant.

Last year in my welcome and introductory remarks an offer was extended to those in attendance. An offer that for one reason or another was not taken up by anyone. An offer that should be voiced again.

This offer is motivated by our continuing interest in seeking your suggestions, direct help and important involvement in planning and sponsoring future conferences and by my concern that to obtain this broad-based involvement perhaps we need to establish a Pacific Islands Association, non-profit

in nature, made up of interested faculty, students and community leaders whose goals and purposes are central to the fostering of understanding and knowledge of the peoples and cultures of the Pacific Islands region. If you have an interest in involving yourself in the establishment of such an association, please contact us directly or write about such an interest somewhere on the evaluation forms that will be distributed.

Our conference this year, as was the case last year, spans two days. Following this evening's keynote address, four challenging sessions are scheduled tomorrow. All focus appropriately on the theme: The Emerging Pacific Island States.

Before I introduce our speaker this evening, let me touch ever so briefly on the current status of the Emerging Pacific Island states. The decolonization and emergence of self-governing Pacific Island nations is a relatively recent geopolitical event, and, according to many international political leaders, scholars and Pacific Islands observers, is also most welcomed. While the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represent a time of active European expansion, or empire building, in the Pacific, the last two decades have witnessed the birth of numerous independent island states. Of the twenty island countries and/or territories in the Pacific basin who in fact have the clear option of self-government and/or independence, ten have or will have attained independence or self-government by July, 1979.

As metropolitan authorities, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia have been in the forefront of this process of political change. In 1962 Western Samoa became the first fully independent Polynesian state. Three years later, the Cook Islands achieved self-government in Free Association with New Zealand. Nauru, with astute island leaders and a valuable economic resource, acquired independence in 1968 and full control over the lucrative phosphate

industry two years later. Fiji, with a population of nearly 600,000 and unsettling ethnic and racial tensions, gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1970. In the same year, Tonga, the only remaining Polynesian kingdom, became completely independent of Great Britain. Tongan political history dates from an 1875 constitution and foreign treaties which recognized the island state's de jure independence. De facto independence, however, waited nearly a century to occur.

In 1974 and 1975 the small island of Niue and the giant Papua New Guinea each attained new political status. Niue, like the Cook Islands, opted for self-government in Free Association with New Zealand. Papua New Guinea, rich in natural resources and diverse cultures, became fully independent in 1975 after 90 years of colonial rule. Last year the Solomon Islands and land-scarce Tuvalu (formerly the Ellice Islands) became fully independent nations. Later this year the Gilbert Islands, the closest island group to the State of Hawaii, will become the independent nation of Kiribati and, from preliminary indications, may be looking north to Hawaii for economic relations and other assistance.

In Micronesia, more specifically the area referred to as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, political events are moving apace. The Northern Mariana Islands are one year into Commonwealth status with the United States and are witnessing their share of different groups seeking internal political power. Palau and the Marshall Islands will, in all probability, soon install constitutional governments in place of the Trust Territory administration. The Federated States of Micronesia, which presently includes Ponape, Truk, Kosrae and Yap, has very recently elected a new Congress and is looking toward 1981, when it and the break-away districts of Palau and the Marshalls will become self-governing states, freely associated with the United States.

With the notable exception of the French territories, political change

has been relatively rapid in the Pacific basin in the last two decades. It is difficult to believe that this process, which appears to have a tone of inevitability to it, will leave the French territories untouched.

This new political character of the islands in the Pacific basin, coupled with advances in modern air travel and telecommunications which brings us all closer together, raises an important question for Hawaii, "What are the ramifications and the potential of Hawaii's present and future relationships with the other Pacific islands?"

To speak to this question, we are fortunate to have with us this evening Mr. Hideto Kono, Director, Department of Planning & Economic Development, State of Hawaii.

Mr. Kono was born in Hilo, Hawaii. He attended Hilo High School, graduated from the University of Hawaii with a BA degree and an MA in Public Administration. He served as a research assistant with the University Legislative Reference Bureau, was Chief Clerk, Senate Ways & Means Committee during two separate legislative sessions, served as Staff Council, Joint Legislative Commission for the Reorganization of Hawaii State Government and was Acting Deputy Director, East-West Center (on loan from the Dole Company for six months). In private industry Mr. Kono served as Vice-President of Dole-Itochu Food Co., Ltd., Tokyo; Vice-President, Jintan Dole Company, Ltd., Osaka and as President, Castle & Cooke East Asia Company for ten years prior to becoming Director, State Department of Planning & Economic Development in 1974. Mr. Kono is a member of the Honolulu Symphony Society and was Director of the Hawaii Visitors Bureau for two years.

We are aware, Mr. Kono, of your outstanding achievements as a public administrator and international business manager. We view your acceptance of our invitation to speak here tonight as symbolic of the State of Hawaii

Department of Planning & Economic Development's mandated responsibility to be innovative and creative in carrying out its planning and economic development functions. We sense your interest in exploring the potential and ramifications of Hawaii's present and future relationships with other Pacific islands and are eager to hear now what you have come to relate regarding "Hawaii's Plan for Future Relations with the Other Pacific Islands."

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you Mr. Hideto Kono, Director, Department of Planning & Economic Development, State of Hawaii.